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ABSTRACT

This two-week unit, appropriate for bilingual education settings as well as foreign language programs, deals with the three primary cultural influences found in Mexican contemporary art. The multisensory materials, pragmatic focus, and direct creative student involvement are designed to make it a microcosmic, real-life experience. The first part of the unit, in Spanish, deals with artistic expressions that reflect a mixture of various cultural influences. These include international influences in the modern period, Hispanic, French and Arab influences in the colonial period, and indigenous influences in the Precolumbian Period. The second part, in English, covers artistic expression in home furnishings and decorations. These reflect wide variation in materials, pluralistic cultural influences, and multiple levels of sophistication. Each section provides the following: (1) lesson objectives; (2) suggested and recommended activities; and (3) creative project suggestions including the rationale for them, requirements, procedures for the operational classroom experience, and a list of areas from which to choose the project item. The unit includes step-by-step instructions for the teacher, illustrations, and a list of reference materials. (Author/AMH)

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Subjeto - la Cultura Mexicana
Nivel - II

Por Dr. Neal Finere
9 de julio 1978 ©

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UNIDAD: LAS INFLUENCIAS CULTURALES EN EL ARTE MEXICANA
(2 semanas)

I. PROPÓSITO

Las expresiones artísticas mexicanas reflejan una mezcla de varias influencias culturales. Incluyen las influencias internacionales en el período moderno; las influencias hispánicas, francesas, y árabes en el período colonial; y las influencias indígenas en el período precolombino.

II. OBJETIVOS

Al completar esta unidad, el estudiante podrá:

A. Reconocer e identificar las influencias principales en el desarrollo de la cultura mexicana
B. Nombrar y describir los característicos mayores del arte en los tres períodos culturales de México
C. Distinguir y clasificar ejemplos del arte mexicana según la influencia cultural.
D. Apreciar las contribuciones del arte mexicana al desorrollo de la cultura mundial
E. Demostrar por lo menos una técnica artística mexicana y producir una obra artística en un estilo mexicano

III. MATERIALES

Los siguientes materiales serán necesarios para esta unidad:

A. Materiales audio-viuales: artefactos, láminas, pinturas, murales, dibujos, transparencias (diopositivas)*, transparencias para el retroproyector, películas, tiras fílmicas;** discos;** cintas, escultura, mapas, y una línea del tiempo.
*Transparencias #CS1216, CS544, CS1884, CS1204, CS1217, CS1220, CS1366, CS1372, CS373, CS1367, CS375, CS378, CS370, y CS379 de: American Color Slide Library Company, 305 East 45th Street, New York, New York.
**Discos mexicanos; Schwam Record Catalog of Folk Music.
***Tiras fílmicas: "Artistic Mexico," New York Times Series #8: Educational Service Center, Región XX, San Antonio, Texas.

B. Materiales escritos: libros, revistas, folletos, materias para [redacted] los estudiantes. Bibliografía básica:

1) Fernández, Justino. A Guide to Mexican Art. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.
2) Beacham, Hans. The Architecture of Mexico: Yesterday and Today, New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1969.
3) Quirarte, Jacinto. Mexican American Artists. Austin: Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1973.
4) Castedo, Leopoldo. A History of Latin American Art and Architecture. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969.
5) Art Index.
6) McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Art.
7) Encyclopedia Britannica; Encyclopedia Americana; etc.
8) Americas Magazine (Washington D.C.); Artes de Mexico (Mexico D.F.); etc.
9) Christensen, Erwin H. A Guide to Art Museums in the

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United States. New York: Dodd and Mead, 1968.
10) Who's Who in American Art 1936-74. Washington: American Federation of the Arts, 1936-74.
11) Linderman, Earl W. Teaching Secondary School Art: Discovering Art Objectives, Art Skills, Art Art Ideas. Dubuque: William C. Brown, 1971.
12) Fearing, Kelly; Cylde Inez Martin; and Evelyn Beard. Our Expanding Vision. Austin: W.S. Benson, 1960.

IV. ACTIVIDADES Y PROCEDIMIENTOS

Lección I: La cultura mexicana expresada en el arte y la arquitectura (La introducción)

A. Considere los estilos del arte y la arquitectura en nuestra ciudad, estado, y país. Observe la mezcla de los estilos en los Estados Unidos.

(3 días)

B. Enseñe la tira fílmica: "Seeing Mexico: Its Culture" (Coronet). Pregunte: ¿Hay muchos estilos artísticos en Mexico?*

C. Discuta las varias influencias culturales en Mexico.

D. Muestre una línea del tiempo de la cultura mexicana. Pregunte:
1. ¿Puede identificar los tres períodos principales en la cultura mexicana?
2. ¿Puede nombrar y describir los característicos mayores del arte en los tres períodos?

E. Presenta transparencias diopositivas del arte y la arquitectura de los tres períodos en México. (10 ejemplos de cada período) Observe las diferencias

F. Pregunte: ¿Puede distinguir y clasificar ejemplos del arte mexicana según la influencia cultural? Presenta tres transparencias (de cada período) y avaluar el progreso de los estudiantes.

G. Prepare una exhibición de artefactos de cada período para los estudiantes a ver y tocar.

*actividad alternativa: prepare una grabación de la cinta de las ideas de Samuel Ramos, Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico, notando las contribuciones del arte mexicana al desarrollo de la cultura mundial.

Lección II: Las expresiones artísticas mexicanas en las decoraciones para la casa (El desarollo)

(5 días)

H. Considere los muebles y las decoraciones en su casa. Pregunte:
1. ¿Puede describir las varias materias?
2. ¿Puede identificar las influencias culturales?
3. ¿Puede clasificar el nivel de sofisticación?

(Van a encontrar los detalles en las páginas siguientes. Está escrito en el inglés para el uso de los maestros del arte monolingüe en la escuela secundaria de Alamo Heights)

I. Presenta transparencias diopositivas de los muebles y las decoraciones en las casas mexicanas.

J. Apunte a diferencias en materias, influencias culturales, niveles de sofisticación.

K. Observe láminas, dibujos, transparencias para el retroproyector de las otras expresiones de las decoraciones para la casa (las pinturas, escultura, etc)

L. Presenta el proyecto artístico principal. Los estudian-

tes van a experimentar con varias técnicas, materias, estilos, etc. para producir una cosa decorativa para la casa.

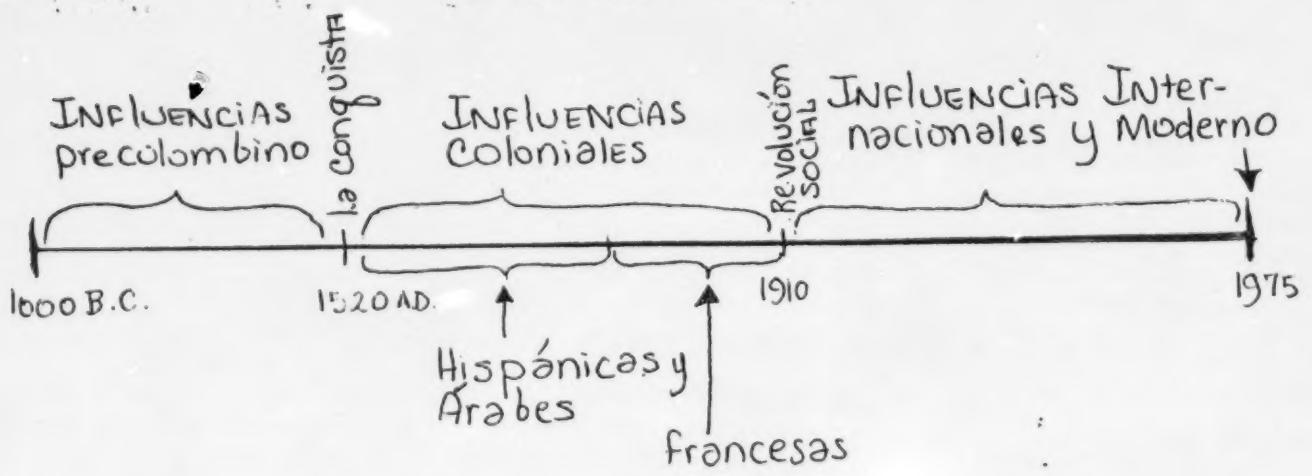
M. Prepare cinco estaciones de instrucción para explicar el proyecto a los estudiantes.

Lección III: Volaración(La conclusión)

N. Discuta las resultas de los estudios
O. Prepare una prueba (oral o escrita)
P. Observe el progreso de los estudiantes (cognoscitivo y afectivo)
Q. Presenta los proyectos artísticos

(2 días)

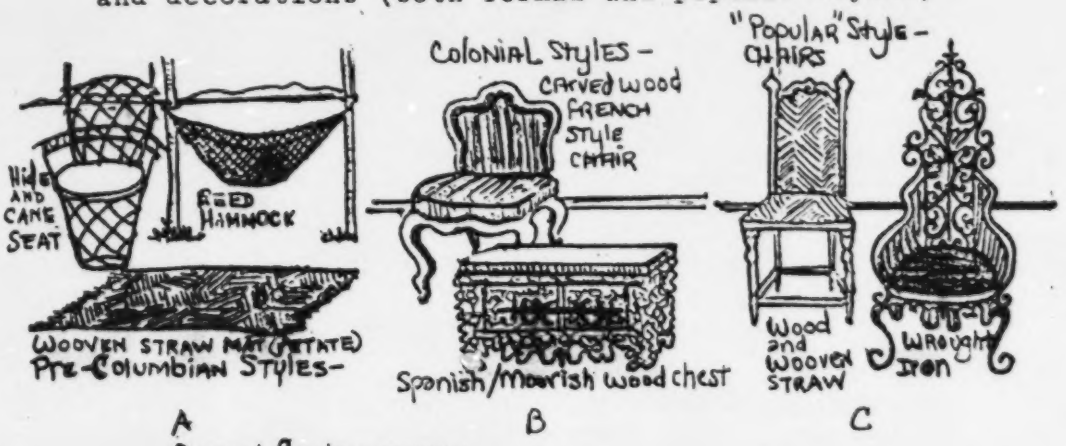
Una Línea del tiempo: Las Influencias Culturales

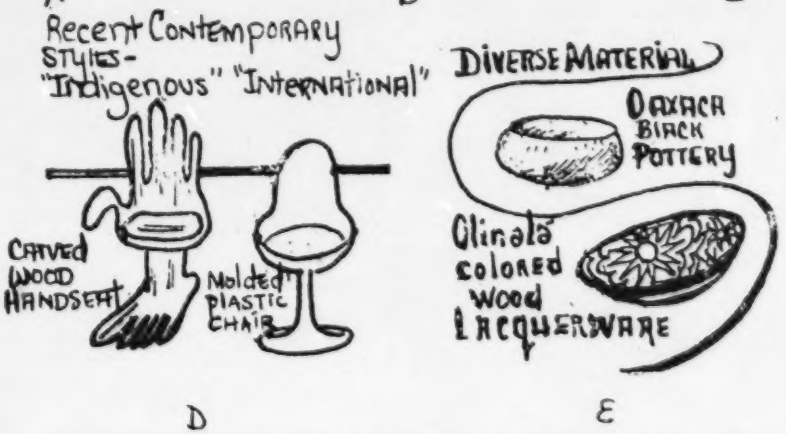


5 DAY LESSON 2 MEXICAN ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS IN HOME FURNISHINGS

Key Idea and Illustrations

Mexican artistic expressions in home furnishings and decorations (both formal and popular styles)





Numerous Cultural Influences
Metepec Spanish-Christian motif (Biblical King)
New Mexico Pueblo Pottery Geometric Pre-Columbian motif
F
Multiple Levels of Sophistication
Gemma Taccogna de Roth - papier-mâché with sophisticated glazings
Simple pre-Columbian stamped decoration
G

reflect wide variation in materials, pluralistic cultural influences, and multiple levels of sophistication.

Lesson Objectives

(1) To develop critical appreciation of Mexican expressions in home furnishings and decorations (both formal and popular styles) by identifying variation in materials, noting pluralistic cultural influences, and considering multiple levels of sophistication.

(2) To experience the materials (techniques), cultural influences (styles), and levels of sophistication (refinements) involved in creating a home decoration item that expresses Mexican artistic heritage (a major creative project requiring operational studio participation).

Suggested Activities and Recommended Activity

Introduction. Begin by asking: why are home furnishings and decorations considered forms of artistic expression? (Source: Gowans, Images of American Living). Ask for volunteers to describe the furnishings in their home? To each respondent, address three specific follow-up questions (1) How would you describe various materials used? (2) What cultural influence(s) or style(s) do these furnishings reflect? (3) What is their level of sophistication (considering workmanship and design as either refined or crudely executed)?

Development. Apply these same criteria to Mexican home furnishings and decorations (both formal and popular styles). Emphasize materials, styles, and detailing (critical awareness stressed) as students view overhead projections of items selected from the major cultural periods.

Observe the first three overhead projects from the pre-Columbian period: a hide and cane Huichol Indian ceremonial seat; Yucatecan petate (woven straw mat used for sleeping); reed hammock from Chiapas. Ask specific questions about materials, styles, and detailing as suggested above. (Sources: Luís Covarrubias, Mexican Native Arts and Crafts, p. 1; Shipway, Mexican Interiors, p. 50; "The Ancient New World", optional film showing similar items). (Project Illustration A)

Now observe the two projections from the colonial period: a carved wood French style chair with cabriole legs and damask upholstery; and an intricately carved Spanish wood chest with heavy iron hardware and delicately inlaid top surface in a Moorish style geometric design. Follow up with the appropriate sequence of three questions. (Sources: "Mexican Homes," Artes de Mexico: Hoag, Western Islamic Art; "The Spanish Influence"/"Town in Old Mexico," optional short films with similar furnishings displayed.) (Project Illustration B)

Continue with two projections of popular styles. The intricately wrought iron chair (reflecting Spanish traditions in ironwork) and the simply designed wood and woven straw chair (reflecting pre-Columbian weaving traditions) are widely available in Mexican markets. Follow with questions. (Sources: Shipway, Mexican Interiors, pp. 135-138.) Consider an art field experience (individually or group) after class, if time/locale allow. Plan a direct contact with the popular arts, e.g., San Antonio Market or an international gift shop with Mexican items; a museum or art gallery with displays of Mexican items; a university or cultural center with Mexican collections; a guest speaker knowledgeable in Mexican popular arts. If none of these are feasible, an alternative reinforcement would be to show the film, "Arts and Crafts of Mexico," (Part I, 14 minutes, and Part II, 11 minutes, Encyclopedia Britannica Films) and refer to Appendix L. (Project Illustration C)

Now observe the two projections from the recent contemporary period: an international style molded plastic chair (reflecting the "boldness of form" found in modern Mexican furnishings); and the highly unique carved wood hand/foot seats by the world famous Mexican artist Pedro Friedeberg (also reflecting "boldness of form" that has roots in pre-Columbian simplicity and colonial gracefulness). Note that these hand/foot seats are sold in art galleries for collector's items as well as furnishings in the $700.00 to $3000.00 U.S.C. price range. (Faulkner, Art, p. 110; Catalog on Pedro Friedeberg, Galería Edan, Costera, M. Aleman, Acapulco; "Mexican Homes," Artes de Mexico.) Follow with the appropriate sequence of critical questions. (Project Illustration D)

Besides these types of furnishings, what other forms of decorative expression would you expect to find in a Mexican home? Responses can include: pottery, painting, weaving, sculpture/carving, papier maché items, wall hangings, masks, piñatas, glassware, tinwork, prayer discs, lacquerware, basketry, etc. (Source: Appendix I

provides a detailed list of Mexican popular arts, many of which are home decorations.) Note the inclusion of the popular arts of the U.S. Southwest since these are closely associated with Mexican cultural traditions, in home decoration particularly. Do you have any examples of these Mexican-oriented decorations in your home? Now show a brief filmstrip, "Artistic Mexico," which provides a summary overview of the various decorative items produced. (Source: "Artistic Mexico," New York Times Film Series, 8.)

Conclusion.

(1) Summarize by a directed discussion including perceptual questions ascertaining student readiness to proceed to the major creative project that follows (which will be summarized during the concluding day of this art section when these projects will be presented and discussed in a detailed class forum)

(2) Of the home furnishings and decorative items observed, which three items impressed you the most? Explain the reasons why? Which one of these three would you like to have in your home? Describe it critically, i.e., in terms of materials, cultural styles, detailing? Consider the possibilities and limitations involved in making a similar item yourself? What are the materials (processes, costs, etc.); styles (degree of difficulty in following); refinements (the practical skills needed to execute the processes properly)?

Creative Project

Rationale. Now you will have an opportunity to make an item to decorate your home, reflecting one of the artistic traditions found in Mexico or the southwestern border states of the U.S. (closely associated with Mexican artistic foundations). You will have a wide range of choices from which to select the item you wish to make. For instance, if you choose to make a "popular" style bowl, investigations will reveal countless variations in diverse materials, e.g., black pottery from Oaxaca to lacquered wood from Olinalá, Guerrero. (Covarrubias, Arts and Crafts, pp. 5,7.) Also numerous cultural influences will soon become apparent, e.g., pre-Columbian geometric designs of the New Mexican Pueblo potters (Bunzel, Pueblo

Potter, pp. 122-28), colonial Spanish and Christian ideas evident in the Metepec designs of Biblical kings (Covarrubias, Arts and Crafts, p. 4). Note the multiple levels of sophistication, from the highly sophisticated glazed papier-maché of Gemma Taccogna de Roth, found in the Bazaar Sábado of Mexico City (Shipway, Interiors, p. 229) in contrast to the simple pre-Columbian animal stamp clay bowls found in the San Juan Market of Mexico City (Jorge Enciso, Designs from Ancient Mexico, p. 108). (Opaque projections of these examples should now be shown, Illustrations E, F, and G)

(Note to the teacher: In fairness to the student, it should be pointed out that the project will be evaluated in terms of the care given to reflecting Mexican tradition in the student's own way: imaginative adaptation)

Requirements

1. Project Item must reflect Mexican (Southwestern) artistic traditions . . .
2. It should reflect your own tastes, interests, skills, and imagination . . .
3. It will be on display for the class the last day of this section on art . . . you should write a 2 page summation of the specific criteria, materials, and sources employed. Be ready to discuss your project in a general class forum.

(Note to the teacher: the learning stations should be built from the references listed below and the subsequent source list plus any artifacts or samples the teacher can display or illustrate on five separate tables spread across the room. Also, tape recorded explanations and short filmstrips could be profitably included depending upon availability)

Procedures for the Operational Studio Experience

1. Tomorrow the class (first half) will be divided into 5 learning stations based on Mexican artistic expressions. You will have an opportunity to note sample articles and photos and review reference books . . . which will be available for room use during the remainder of this art section.
2. Since class time is limited, you should consider the five areas listed below and

(Note to the teacher: Although clear guidelines are specified for basing the project on Mexican artistic inspirations, this should not preclude an emphasis on an open, inquiring approach by students)

narrow your choice to two areas before starting the learning stations tomorrow.

3. Your choice of item should be unlabored yet carefully considered in terms of time, materials, cost, and your own skills and preferences (remember: this is to be a decorative item for your home as well as an expression of cultural tradition and your own imaginative adaptation)
4. The majority of the work on the project will be done outside of class. Therefore, the following reference list is a starting point for your own research and completion of the project.

Organization

(Five areas from which to choose the Project Item)

1. Pottery making
2. Weaving - wall hangings
3. Sculpture - carving
4. Painting - design
5. Miscellaneous - papier-maché items, masks, prayer disks, tinwork, piñatas, basketry, jewelry that might also serve as a decorative item, mosaic, wood inlay, etc.

Background Reference List:

1. Henry Petterson, Creating Form in Clay (New York: Reinhold, 1968).

Ruth L. Bunzel, The Pueblo Potter (New York: Dover Publications, 1972). $3.00

2. Sarita R. Rainey, Wall Hangings: Designing with Fabric and Thread (Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publications, 1971).

   Charlet Albaum, Ojo de Díos-Eye of God (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1972). $1.50

3. George Kubler, Santos, An Exhibition of the Religious Folk Art of New Mexico (Ft. Worth, Tex.: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1964). $2.00

   Marjorie Miller, Indian Arts and Crafts . . . A "How To" Guide (Los Angeles: Nash, 1972). $2.45

4. Toor, Frances, Mexican Popular Arts: Being a Fond Glance at the Craftsmen and their Handiwork in Ceramics, Textiles, Metals, Glass, Paint, Fibers, and other Materials (Detroit, Mich.: Blaine Ethridge Books, 1973).

   Jorge Enciso, Design Motifs of Ancient Mexico (New York: Dover, 1971). $2.50

   _____, Designs from Pre-Columbian Mexico (New York: Dover, 1971). $1.50

5. Mary Davis, and Greta Pack, Mexican Jewelry (Austin, Tex.: The University of Texas Press, 1963). $6.50

   Pauline Johnson, Creating with Paper, Basic Forms and Variations (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1958) (piñatas, figures, etc.).